STATE OF NEW YORK

10288

IN SENATE

May 11, 2026

Introduced by Sen. SKOUFIS -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Judiciary

AN ACT to amend the judiciary law, in relation to pro bono service by attorneys and candidates for admission to the bar; and providing for the repeal of such provisions upon expiration thereof

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. Subdivision 3 of section 53 of the judiciary law, as amended by chapter 450 of the laws of 1994, is amended to read as follows:

3. The court shall prescribe rules providing for a uniform system of examination of candidates for admission to practice as attorneys and counsellors, which shall govern the state board of law examiners in the performance of its duties. **Such rules may require a candidate for admission to the bar to complete a certain number of hours of qualifying pro bono service prior to filing an application for admission; provided, however, that such qualifying pro bono service shall not include any hours assisting in the provision of legal services required pursuant to an agreement between the candidate for admission's supervisor or the supervisor's law firm and the federal government under which the federal government specifies the recipient or recipients or type or types or nature of such legal services.** The court shall not by its rules cause to be barred from examination or, upon successful completion of the examination process, subsequent admission to the state bar, provided [~~he or she~~] **the candidate** shall otherwise meet any requirements for admission, any person who is currently admitted to practice in the jurisdiction of another state and has received a degree from a law school which qualifies such person to practice law in such state, other than a law school which grants credit for correspondence courses, provided that such person has been engaged in the actual practice of law in the state in which they are admitted for no less than five years.

§ 2. Subdivision 3 of section 468-a of the judiciary law, as added by chapter 714 of the laws of 1981, is amended to read as follows:

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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3. The chief administrator shall prescribe the form in which such registry of attorneys shall be maintained and the procedures for public access thereto, and may make all such other rules and regulations necessary and appropriate to implement and enforce the provisions of this section. **Such form may require an attorney to report the number of hours of pro bono service completed by the attorney at the time the attorney files a biennial registration statement; provided, however, that such qualifying pro bono service shall not include any hours assisting in the provision of legal services required pursuant to an agreement between an attorney or the attorney's law firm and the federal government under which the federal government specifies the recipient or recipients or type or types or nature of such legal services.**

§ 3. The judiciary law is amended by adding a new section 484-a to read as follows:

§ 484-a. Compulsory legal services prohibited. No law firm employer in the state of New York may require an employee to assist in the provision of legal services provided pursuant to an agreement between the law firm and the federal government under which the federal government specifies the recipient or recipients or type or types or nature of such legal services.

§ 4. This act shall take effect on the one hundred eightieth day after it shall have become a law and shall expire and be deemed repealed January 20, 2029. Effective immediately, the addition, amendment and/or repeal of any rule or regulation necessary for the implementation of this act on its effective date are authorized to be made and completed on or before such effective date.